

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject application are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-16 and 27 are all the claims pending in the application. In response to the Office Action, Applicant respectfully submits that the claims define patentable subject matter.

I. Overview of the Office Action

Claims 1-4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nakamura et al. (U.S. Patent No. 7,154,452, hereafter “Nakamura”) in view of newly cited Sugimoto (U.S. Patent No. 6,897,850). Claim 8 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over newly cited Chiu et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2005/0030255, hereafter “Chiu”) in view of Nakamura. Claims 15 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nakamura in view of Someya et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,759,996, hereafter “Someya”). Claims 9-14 are allowed. Claims 5-7 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. By this Amendment, claim 5 has been rewritten in independent form. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 5-7 are now in condition for allowance.

II. Preliminary Matters

Applicant notes that the Examiner has not addressed new claim 27. Accordingly, Applicant submits that the finality of the Office Action is premature, and requests that the Examiner withdraw the finality of the Office Action and enter the amendments set forth herein as a matter of course. Otherwise, Applicant requests that the Examiner indicate that claim 27 is allowable.

III. Prior Art Rejections

A. Rejection of claims 1-4 based on Nakamura and Sugimoto

The Examiner alleges that Nakamura discloses all of the features of independent claim 1 except for the feature “wherein a front surface of the holding stand has a U-shaped section at each of two side ends and another U-shaped section at a lower end” as recited in claim 1. The Examiner thus relies on Sugimoto to allegedly cure this deficiency. Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner’s position.

Sugimoto discloses an information processing apparatus (FIG. 2B) which comprises a pair of display sections (4a and 4b). Playback of display data and audio data relating to the display data are changed over in an associated relationship with each other in response to an open or closed state of a lid (the Abstract). A display control section and an audio control section control the display of an image and the playback of audio data related to the image based on the opening and closing of the lid (the Abstract). Sugimoto further discloses that a cradle (16, FIG. 14) may be connected to a computer, and the information processing apparatus 1 may be loaded into the cradle (column 12, lines 6-15).

The Examiner appears to read the claimed holding stand on the cradle 16 of Sugimoto. However, there is no teaching or suggestion in Sugimoto that “a front surface of the holding stand has a U-shaped section at each of two side ends and another U-shaped section at a lower end”, as recited in claim 1.

Sugimoto appears to disclose a U-shaped section at the base of the cradle and not at the front of the cradle, as required by the claim.

Nevertheless, in order to expedite prosecution, Applicant has amended claim 1 in order to more clearly define the carrying case of the holding stand, and to emphasize that the U-shaped section is in the carrying case and not in the base.

B. Rejection of claim 8 based on Chiu and Nakamura

Applicant respectfully submits that Chiu does not cure the basic deficiencies of Nakamura, and further does not qualify as prior art. Applicant notes that the present application claims priority from JP 2002-354749 filed December 6, 2002 while the Chiu publication was filed on August 7, 2003. Therefore, the earliest effective filing date for the subject matter relied on by the Examiner in Chiu is August 7, 2003. Since the foreign priority date of the present application is earlier than the U.S. filing date of Patent Application Publication No. 2002/011204, Chiu must be removed as prior art. By this Amendment, Applicant provides a verified English translation of JP 2002-354749.

C. Rejection of claims 15 and 16 based on Nakamura and Someya

In the previous Office Action dated November 1, 2007, the Examiner acknowledged that Nakamura does not teach or suggest the feature “a decision unit for comparing the page information of the image data received by the receiving unit and page setting information preset for each thin display device depending on the series connections between the thin display devices with each other to decide whether or not the page information and the page setting information coincide with each other”, as recited in claim 15 and analogously recited in claim 16. The Examiner thus relied on Someya to allegedly cure this conceded deficiencies.

In the previous Amendment filed on February 28, 2008, Applicant submitted that column 6, lines 61-64 of Someya, which the Examiner cites as allegedly disclosing this feature of the

claims, merely discloses how an index tester 11 tests the bits at a bit position corresponding to a unit number output by a unit number setting device 10. Nowhere does this portion (or any other portion) of Someya disclose “a decision unit for comparing the page information of the image data received by the receiving unit and page setting information preset for each thin display device depending on the series connections between the thin display devices with each other to decide whether or not the page information and the page setting information coincide with each other”, as required by the claims.

In response, the Examiner merely asserts:

Someya discloses, in col. 4, lines 61-64, the index tester comparing the unit number (page setting information) and the index data ID (page information) with each other and then generates a frame (page) selection signal. Therefore, Someya still reads on the claim and the rejection stands.²

Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner’s position and submits that this feature of the claims is neither taught nor suggested by the cited references. With this aspect of the claim, page settings (page positions of the sheets of electronic paper 10 which are held in the host device 21) are set and stored in control units in advance depending on arrangements of serial connections of the sheets of electronic paper 10 held in the host device 21. The display page field P1 (FIG. 6) is compared with the page settings which are set in the sheets of electronic paper 10 in advance, so that an image based on image data corresponding to the display page field P1 is displayed on the electronic paper 10, the page setting of which coincides with the display page field P1. Accordingly, if the sheets of electronic paper 10 are removed from the host device 21, and the sheets of electronic paper 10 are not returned to the original page

² Page 9 of the Office Action.

position, the image data would not be placed on the wrong pages. This allows the display on the sheets of electronic paper 10 to be controlled. Applicant respectfully submits that this aspect of the claimed invention is not disclosed by the cited reference. Someya merely discloses comparing an index number and a unit number to generate a frame selection signal (column 4, lines 61-64).

In the previous Amendment, Applicant submitted that there is no teaching or suggestion in Someya of “a control unit for controlling the display of the display units based on a decision result of the decision unit, and a sending unit for sending the image data, to which the page information has been added, to the thin display device of the subsequent page or the host device”, as required by the claims. Applicant further argued that since page information is not added to the image data in the system of Someya, Someya cannot disclose sending image, data to which page data has been added, to the display units, as claimed.

In response, the Examiner merely asserts:

Someya discloses a control unit (col. 4, lines 63-67; frame selector). The frame selector receives a signal generated by the decision unit (index tester) and determines which frames should be displayed on the display and which should be passed on to the next display. As for the sending unit, Someya discloses a sending unit (col. 12, lines 33-38; image signal output circuit). Therefore, Someya still reads on the claim and the rejection stands.³

Again, Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner’s position. First, the Examiner appears to read the claimed sending unit on the image signal output circuit 22 (FIG. 26) of Someya. However, it does not appear that the image signal output circuit 22 is outputting

³ Page 9 of the Office Action.

to the display device as claimed. Applicant respectfully submits that there is no teaching or suggestion in Someya that the image signal output circuit outputs image data to which page information has been added, as required by the claims.

Further, Someya, appears to disclose that multiple image display units have different unit numbers (the Abstract), and the unit number is compared with an index signal embedded in an image signal, each image display unit can display different images using a signal line. The unit number is set by a unit number setting device 10 in each unit (see Fig. 5), which is described as a "DIPswitch" in the specification.

On the other hand, in the claimed invention, each thin display device has a receiving unit, a sending unit, and an updating unit. The updating unit updates page information, and then the information is sent to the subsequent pages or the host device. Accordingly, in the claimed invention, updating of the page data is carried out at each display device; hence it is unnecessary for each display device to have individual IDs (the unit numbers) and the unit number setting device as disclosed in Someya.

Further, because there is no requirement for individual IDs, in the instant invention, the display order can be matched to the existing arrangement order of the thin display devices.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 15 and 16 should be allowable because the cited references do not teach or suggest all of the features of the claims, and one of ordinary skill in the art would not have been motivated to modify or combine the reference to produce the claimed invention.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the

Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

/Mark E. Wallerson/

SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
Telephone: (202) 293-7060
Facsimile: (202) 293-7860

WASHINGTON OFFICE

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CUSTOMER NUMBER

Mark E. Wallerson
Registration No. 59,043

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